

## **CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**

**Monday, January 4, 2016**

**The Center of Clayton – Multipurpose Room C**

**Members present:** Joanne Boulton, Jenaro Centeno, Cynthia Garnholz, David LaGessee, Missy McCormick, Jeanne Most and Eric Schneider

**Absent:** Maripat Gatter, Becky Patel, Mark Stapleton and Melanie Tamsky

*Also Present:* Patty DeForrest, Wayne Dunker, Dan Krewson, Toni Siering and Sarah Umlauf

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Minutes from the December meeting were approved as written.

### **Addresses from the Audience:**

There were no addresses from the audience

### **7612 Westmoreland Plan:**

Ms. DeForrest stated that staff's recommendation is to tear down the house at this property. Residents were notified that this would be discussed at tonight's meeting in order to gather community input on tearing the house down. The reason for purchasing the property was to acquire additional park land. At this time, the City did not include funds in the budget to maintain the property and does not have a use for the home. The total park acreage added is approximately .25 acres.

Mr. Bob Paster, Clayton Century Foundation History (CCF – History) Board President, stated that he advocated tearing down the house because having extra open space around Hanley House will be nice. He explained that the CCF – History section is preparing the Historical Society's new location at The Center of Clayton, which comes with additional costs. Since this is taking place, the History Society is interested in having a fundraiser at the house before it is torn down. Mr. Steven Rosenblum mentioned that CCF needs to determine what type of fundraiser could be held on the property. One fundraising idea presented to the Commission was to have an art gallery set up with tickets sold to raise funds. Food and drink would be provided at the event. Ms. DeForrest let them know the party would need to be held within the next three months. One resident asked that the city try to keep the trees during the tear down. She also mentioned having different types of landscaping in the new park land, not just sod. Residents would like to see cultural resources as well as green space. Ms. DeForrest said since the home was purchased quickly, after tearing it down, sod will be put down until a plan is developed. When the area is cleaned up it may improve the turnaround by the alley and help with snow removal and garbage truck access. Mr. Mel Disney complimented the Commission on obtaining the available property. A question was asked about losing artifacts that may be under the new property. Ms. Umlauf said the clean-up crews are always very respectful during the process. After a recent dig she received a child's teapot. Ms. Pamela Fournier asked the Commission to consider putting in Missouri Natives in order to get the land back to a prairie area. Ms. Andrea Rosenblum stated that the area really needs a community garden. It could have 20 to 30 plots and residents could pay to rent one.

The City signed an agreement with Mrs. Winters stating she can occupy the home until the end of January. Ms. DeForrest said they would like to have the house torn down by late April or early May so the new parkland is available for use in the summer. When the house is gone Hanley Park will be more visible. Mr. Schneider asked if anyone in the audience was opposed to tearing down the house, the answer to his question was that no one is opposed to this course of action.

Ms. DeForrest informed the Commission that the City will begin working on the capital budget in a couple of weeks. It is generally developed in 4 to 6 months. The cost to take down the house will be between \$30,000 and \$40,000. There will be an additional cost to restore the land so the total cost may be in the neighborhood of \$50,000. Native plantings will not be a huge expense. Ms. DeForrest mentioned she was surprised no one suggested the site needing a playground. She stated it might be

good to have a few natural play amenities near the Hanley Park Pavilion. It could be as simple as swings or a fort. Off street parking was not considered for the site. Several residents agreed that some play amenities for children would be a nice addition as long as they suited the site.

Mr. David LaGessee made a motion stating the Commission is in favor of taking down the house located at 7612 Westmoreland. Mr. Schneider seconded the motion. All were in favor.

A resident asked if the Commission had taken a stance on keeping Maryland School to use as parkland. Ms. DeForrest told him that the Commission had recommended that the City conduct an open space study to determine where parkland was needed in the City. Study results showed the area near Hanley House needed more parkland but not necessarily the property at Maryland School. It was also suggested parkland was needed in Clayton Gardens and small parks in Downtown Clayton. Furthermore, the Maryland School property is not available because it is currently under contract.

### **Oak Knoll Park Options:**

Ms. DeForrest explained that the goals for the project at Oak Knoll Park were to increase parking, repair the crumbling retaining wall along Big Bend, expand the sidewalk area along Big Bend and improve the main entrance to the park. The wall will be replaced with natural vegetation. The City of Clayton will notify St. Louis County that they will expand the area available for sidewalk so that, when they are ready, they could construct a better sidewalk along this high traffic road. North of the main entrance we will be able to install a path that will meet ADA standards. This will also help parents with children in strollers access the park.

The parking lot will be replaced and additional parking spots will be added. Currently there are 91 parking spots and this number will increase to 122 spots. This improvement will provide more parking for our current tenants as well as visitors to the park. Expansion of the lot in front of the Clayton Child Center will improve drop-off and pick-up for parents. The Parks and Recreation Department did not want a large lot, just some expansion of the existing. A small amount of landscaping will be lost during the project. The pole that obstructs visibility when turning left on to Big Bend will be removed. A speed bump may be considered for the park. Plantings will move closer to the fences closest to homes in Claverach Park. Lighting will also be added for security purposes and will be on a timer. Ms. DeForrest stated that we will reach out to residents so they are aware of parking lot construction. The construction cost to complete this project is estimated to be between \$300,000 and \$350,000.

In regards to the MSD project slated for the western side of the park, that project has been put out to bid by MSD. Bids are due January 20<sup>th</sup> and MSD anticipates that construction would start in late March or April.

### **Director's Report**

Mr. Schneider congratulated the Parks and Recreation Department on doing an excellent job at the St. Louis Blues event that was held on January 2. Ms. DeForrest informed the Commission that the City received revenue from the event. The annual Winter Classic event will be held by Mid-States Hockey in January. Mid-States Hockey pays rental fees in order to host the event at the ice rink. Mr. Centeno suggested promoting Center of Clayton memberships at this event.

Cupid's Ball will be held on February 8 at the Ritz Carlton.

Programs are doing well at The Center. We have been selling many memberships the last couple of months.

The BOA was happy with the revisions to the Chapman Plaza design. SWT is working on Design Development and will not be ready to review with the Parks & Recreation Commission until their March meeting.

The February meeting will include a discussion about the Affiliated User Group program.

Jacobs is working on new renderings of the ice rink. The renderings will not include a roof on the rink. New cost estimates will be provided as well. Ms. DeForrest explained that the design could go out to bid, but is not necessary. Bidding is necessary for the construction portion of the project. The City is only paying a small amount of money to get the re-design and new cost estimates. The work is due to Ms. DeForrest on January 20. The plan would be to bring those to the February meeting to review.

The City entered into a three year agreement with Frontenac Tennis Club earlier this year. Things have been going very well since Frontenac began managing the Shaw Park Tennis Center in 2013. Ms. DeForrest explained how the agreement works and said we still have control over how many courts are available for drop-in use during programming. The most usage takes place from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, and Clayton High Schools Teams uses the tennis center from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Since entering into our first agreement with Frontenac both usage and satisfaction have increased

We are still waiting for notification on whether or not the City received the playground grant for Taylor Park.

**Old Business / New Business:**

Mr. Centeno spoke about his neighbors' concerns in reference to high school students not having access to The Center after school and, at times, during the school day. Ms. DeForrest stated that the High School Administration makes those determinations. It was noted that when winters sports teams begin their season the high school does not permit students to access The Center in the afternoon until after December 1, unless they have a Center membership, due to the high volume of students in the Center. Furthermore, if there are students causing problems at The Center, the High School Administration may choose to close access to all students during the day. Mr. Centeno suggested it might make sense to deal with those issues on an individual basis and not restrict usage to all students.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm

Respectfully Submitted By: Denise Ucinski